was expressly told that no positive assurance could be given to him that the State might not attack the forts in any event. As it seems to us, he was simply put upon his guard, and left absolutely free to act as he might deem best.

But we need not stop to dwell longer on this phase of the negotiations. On December 20th, South Carolina seceded from the Union. On the 22(1, three commissioners, Messrs. Barnwell, Adams, and. **Orr,** were elected by the convention which passed the ordinance of secession "forthwith to proceed to Washington, authorized and empowered to treat with the Government of the United States for the delivery of the forts, magazines, light-houses, and other real estate, with their appurtenances, within the limits of South Carolina; and also for an apportionment of the public debt, and for a division of all other property held by the Government of the United States as agent of the Confederated States, of which South Carolina was recently a member; and, generally, to negotiate as to all other measures and arrangements proper to be made and adopted in the existing relations of the parties, and for the continuance of peace and amity between ?? South Carolina "and the Government at Washington."

What would have been the reception

which these commissioners would have met with at Washing-

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ton had nothing occurred to alter the situation in Charleston Harbor, we can only guess. No doubt President Buchanan would have declined to treat with them; he would unquestionably Lave alleged his want of authority so to do; but he would in